

CIA/OGCR /PN 61.2684/75 ITEM 012 UNCLASSIFIED--PRC CITY BRIEF CHENG-CHOU

CIA JUL75

01 OF 01

CIA/OGCR / PN 61.2684/75

ITEM 012

PRC CITY BRIEF

Cheng-chou 鄭州



7

CIA/OGCR/GD
PN 61.2684/75
July 1975

CHENG-CHOU

(pronounced jung joe)

Chinese romanized system
of spelling:

Zhengzhou

Meaning in Chinese:

Cheng -- region or district.
Cheng was the name of an
ancient feudal state in this
area of the Huang Ho valley
during the 7th-5th centuries
B.C.

Location:

34°45'N 113°40'E
(approx. latitude of Little
Rock, Arkansas and Huntsville,
Alabama)

Elevation:

350 feet above sea level

Population:

900,000

Climate:

	<u>Jan</u>	<u>April</u>	<u>July</u>	<u>Oct</u>
Mean daily maximum temperature (°F)	40	70	90	70
Mean daily minimum temperature (°F)	20	50	70	50
Mean number of days with precipitation	2	5	10	4
Mean monthly precipitation (inches)	0.4	0.9	7.0	0.7

CHENG-CHOU

General

Cheng-chou, the capital of Honan Province and a major North China city, is located a few miles south of the Huang Ho (Yellow River) and some 400 miles from Peking. Although Cheng-chou has significant administrative functions as a provincial capital, its location at the juncture of China's main north-south and east-west railroads has served as the major impetus to its growth and importance, especially during the past 2 decades. Cheng-chou has traditionally functioned as a regional-marketing center, resulting from its location at the western margins of the agriculturally rich North China Plain, and this role has been enlarged greatly. Today Cheng-chou is an important food-processing and cotton textile center. The Chinese appellation "verdant Cheng-chou" describes the park-like appearance that has been created by the thousands of trees planted throughout the city since the early 1950s. The tree-lined streets help to alleviate the drab, uniform landscape of the flat plain on which Cheng-chou is built.

Cheng-chou is divided into three parts: an old town core, a recently built-up section located to the north, and extensive and sprawling industrial areas adjacent to the rail lines in the western and southern sections of the city. The old town core remains a crowded maze even though some of its main streets have been widened and a few new buildings added. Remnants of an ancient, walled village still stand in the old town from which present-day Cheng-chou has evolved. Offices and shops associated with the administration and operation of the railroads are located in the old city area. North of the old town are blocks of governmental, educational, and cultural buildings intermingled with extensive residential areas. Here, the broad, tree-lined avenues and showplace buildings contrast the compact older section of Cheng-chou. The western and southern sections of the city consist largely of light industry and warehouse areas that extend into the agricultural countryside. Two main highways that roughly parallel the rail lines intersect at Cheng-chou and provide the major routes for the movement of goods locally. Regularly scheduled air service to Peking, Kuang-chou (Canton), Wu-han, Shanghai, Nanking, and Sian is available from Cheng-chou. Less frequent service connects Cheng-chou with K'un-ming and other cities in Southwest China.

Spring and autumn are climatically the most pleasant times of the year to visit Cheng-chou. Midsummer temperatures regularly reach 90°F, and higher readings are not uncommon. During July, the wettest month, rain is frequent and often heavy; however, precipitation amounts vary considerably from year to year. Winters are fairly cold and dry, and snowfall is usually light and infrequent.

History

The site of Cheng-chou has been continually occupied for more than 3,000 years. Although it ranked as one of the largest settlements in China during the Shang Dynasty (ca. 1760-1100 B.C.), it declined from this auspicious beginning and remained a sleepy agricultural village through succedent centuries. The modern development of Cheng-chou began in 1898 when foreign interests were granted concessions for the construction of two rail lines -- the north-south Peking-Hankow-Canton and the east-west Lung-hai railroads. By 1910 sections of both lines were in operation through Cheng-chou and the village grew rapidly into a bustling railroad town.

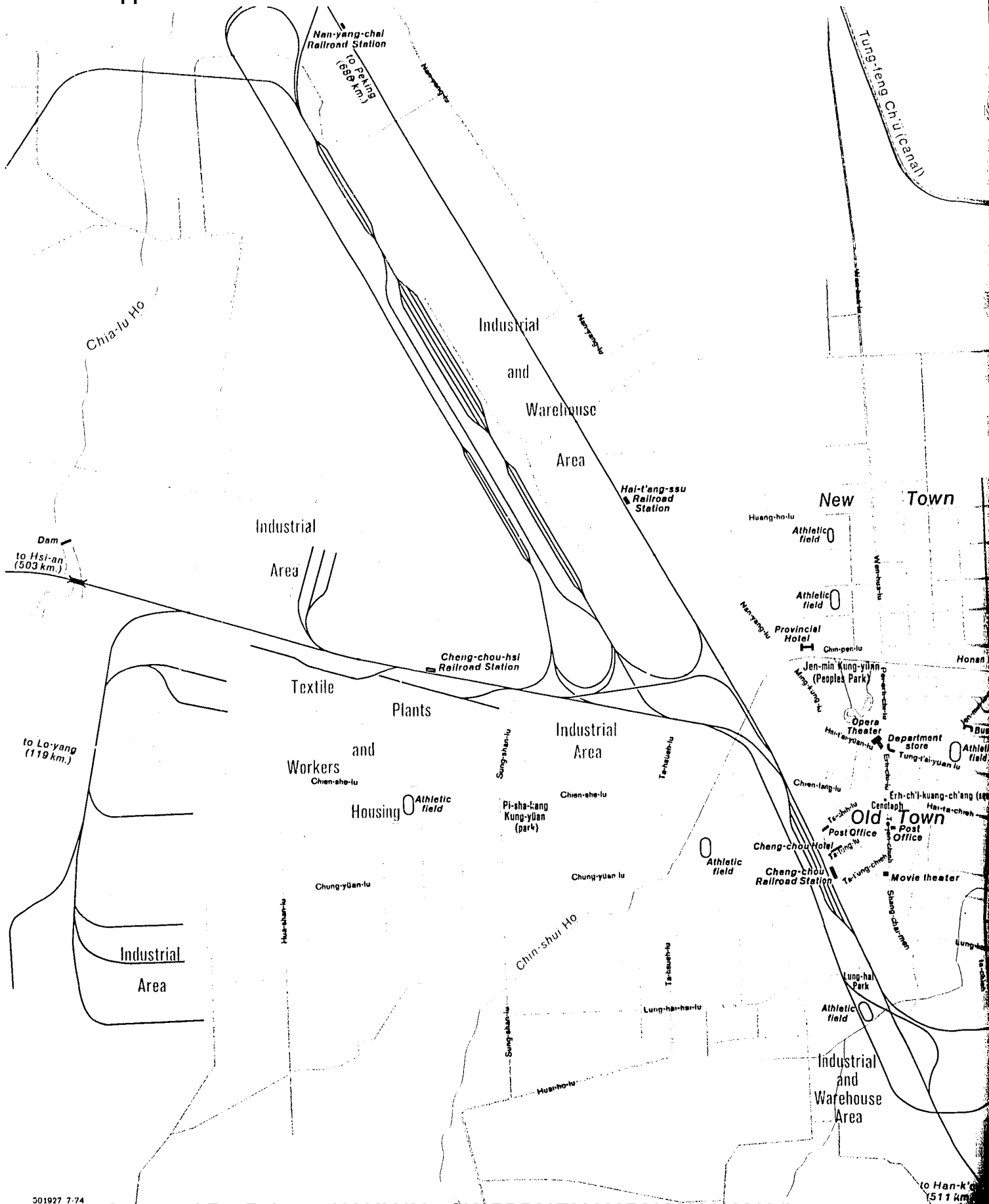
The importance of Cheng-chou as a principal railroad junction in North China made the city a primary objective of the Japanese following the outbreak of Sino-Japanese hostilities in 1937. To check the Japanese advance, the retreating Chinese army breached the dike of the Huang Ho less than 20 miles to the northeast of the city. The devastating flood that followed reached only the outskirts of Cheng-chou, destroying the irrigation and field systems to the east of the town. The diverted river continued periodically to threaten the city until 1947, when the break was repaired under U.S. auspices. Although Cheng-chou survived those years of war and the threat of flooding fairly intact, it was severely damaged during the civil war in 1948-49.

Post-1949 Developments

Cheng-chou was initially rebuilt during 1949-50, but significant urban expansion did not take place until several years later. Because of its location and its excellent transportation facilities, Cheng-chou was designated in 1954 for industrial development. The food-processing and cotton textile industries were given priority, but other types of industry were also included in the plan. In anticipation of the city's growth and importance the provincial capital was transferred from the city of K'ai-feng to Cheng-chou in December 1954.

Cheng-chou today is an important industrial city in North China. A textile complex, which covers a sizable tract of the western part of the city, has five mills that produce both yarn and finished cloth; associated facilities include a textile printing and dyeing plant, several textile machinery plants, and workers housing. Additional textile mills are scattered in other industrial sections of the city. Food-processing and agricultural industries include a meat-processing and by-products plant, flour mills, and an oils and fats plant that processes cottonseed into edible oil and other products. Chemical fertilizer, insecticides, and tractor repair plants are also located in Cheng-chou. The major municipal and provincial government buildings are located in the northern, newer part of Cheng-chou away from the hubbub of trains and machinery. In addition, there are a large number of institutes and schools, including schools of medicine, architecture, commerce, forestry, hydraulic engineering, and agriculture.

Cheng-chou presents some interesting contrasts for the visitor. The compact old town with its narrow streets and traditional houses is a visible reminder of historical China. The new sections of town with their wide streets, parks, multi-story buildings, and growing industrial districts are representative of new urban developments in the China of the past 20 years. Specific tourist attractions are few. A cenotaph, built to commemorate the bloody general strike of railroad workers in February 1923, is a likely stop on a city tour. The Honan provincial museum, located in the newer section of town, contains interesting exhibits of the neolithic, the early dynasties, and the post-1949 periods. Another probable stop is a lapidary shop that specializes in jade.



CHENG-CHOU

— Railroad

Scale 1:40,000

